

November 26, 2025

VIA EMAIL

The Honourable Steven MacKinnon, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport
TC.MinisterofTransport-MinistredesTransports.TC@tc.gc.ca

The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Finance
fin.minfinance-financemin.fin@canada.ca

Ministers,

Re: Unifor's opposition to the government's policy on airport privatization

I write to you today on behalf of Unifor's 320,000 members across Canada, including 17,000 in the air transportation sector. Unifor members in air transportation work in baggage handling, customer service, aircraft maintenance, piloting, airport operations, air navigation services and air traffic control. As a voice for working people, we advocate for policies that protect jobs, improve working conditions, and strengthen the air transportation industry.

Unifor opposes the privatization of airports in Canada.

We also oppose any policy that encourages airport authorities to further pursue subleases, subcontracts, and subsidiaries to invite private investors and pension fund ownership. Our view is that these financialization programs, as well as others, will simply provide monopoly rent-seeking opportunities without creating value for the public or the commercial interests using the airport.

Millions of Canadians travel through airports in this country. They do so for work, to visit family, vacations, and other activities that require travel. We strongly believe that airports should operate for the interests of those who rely on affordable air transport, not on shareholders.

If there is a desire to support increased pension fund investment in Canada, policy should support investment in industrial production not simply through gifting of public goods.

Our members understand from direct experience that the privatization of public infrastructure poses a threat to their livelihoods and the resiliency of that infrastructure.

A policy of privatization will jeopardize the stable, unionized employment that forms the foundation of our safe and efficient aviation sector. Private operators, including pension funds, will inevitably seek to increase their profits at the expense of the public and workers. Downward pressure on wages, the erosion of job security, and a reduction in health and safety standards for the lowest paid workers will be the result.

Privatization of these assets does not create new value, instead it establishes what amounts to a shadow tax on Canadians, subsidizing the profits of investors through fees or substandard service.

There are many examples around the world of the consequences of airport privatization. In the United Kingdom it has led to escalating fees for consumers with the regulators forced to undo fee increases after public outcry and a degradation of service quality.

Instead of strengthening our national transport system, this policy will result in a further erosion of public control and Canadian sovereignty over our most critical infrastructure.

Canada's airports are vital economic hubs and public assets. They require public investment and democratic stewardship, not divestment to private interests.

We call on the government to reject this policy. We urge you, instead, to engage with unions and municipalities to develop a strategy for investing in our public airports for the benefit of all Canadians.

We request a meeting with you and/or your office, and are always available, to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lana Payne'.

Lana Payne
National President, Unifor

/klcope343